

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Guy Ressler Homestead House

other names/site number Elmer Breen House; Thisted Ranch

## 2. Location

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Huson

state Montana

MT

county Missoula

code 063

zip code 59846

X

not for publication

vicinity

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

   entered in the National Register

   determined eligible for the National Register

   determined not eligible for the National Register

   removed from the National Register

   other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- |                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Local   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - State   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Federal |

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- |                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | district    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | site        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | structure   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | object      |

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	<b>Total</b>

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other; vernacular rustic log

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: WOOD; Log

roof: METAL; Steel

other:

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

---

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Guy Ressler homestead house is located in the Burnt Fork Creek drainage, about a half mile above its confluence with Nine Mile Creek, in Missoula County, Montana (SW ¼ SW ¼ NW ¼ of Section 23, Township 17 North, Range 24 West). The adjacent homestead claims of Guy and of his mother, Elizabeth, occupied 320 acres of the gently sloping land east of Burnt Fork Creek. The channel of the creek, from which Guy Ressler drew irrigation and domestic water, is located about 100 meters west of the house. Until 2000, most of Ressler's 160 acres was covered with 90-year old stands of second-growth timber. A couple of clearings, amounting to about 30 acres, represented areas formerly cultivated by Ressler. A summer wildfire destroyed most of the timber and a privy that stood at the forest edge behind the homestead house. The fire also burned timber on Elizabeth Ressler's claim (located adjacent to the north) and destroyed her small log house that had stood since 1913. Although much of the burned timber has been harvested, some bare trunks still stand amidst regenerated groves of twelve-year-old pine and fir. A two-track access road branches east from the main north-south trending Ninemile Road to access the house, which is the only historic-era building remaining within Guy Ressler's homestead claim. Other homestead buildings formerly located in the vicinity of the house included: a root cellar, a henhouse, a log barn, a wagon shed, and a hay barn. A new privy, added after 2000, stands behind the house.

---

### Narrative Description

The Guy Ressler house is a one-story, rectangular, log bearing building with a front-gable roof and a concrete pier foundation. The cabin measures 18 feet by 24 feet 6 inches. The roof structure consists of log purlins covered with rough-cut board sheathing and corrugated galvanized metal. Two stainless steel stove pipes project beyond the roof, one on each side of the building. On the front (southeast) wall, the purlins extend about four feet beyond the wall, forming an overhang that shelters an open stoop made of milled lumber. The saw-cut, peeled wall logs are joined at the corners with axe-cut steeple notches. Spaces between the logs are daubed with cement. In places, poles have been used to chink wide spaces between the wall-logs, with daubing applied on both sides of the chinking.

The front (southeast) wall of the building has an entry offset right of center, with a vertical board door with one small diamond-shaped light, and a wooden screen door. A shuttered window opening with a six-light fixed sash is located in the left half of the wall. The southwest side wall has a central window opening with a three-light fixed sash. The rear (northwest) wall has a central window opening with a pair of four-light casement windows. (Originally, this window opening contained three-light sliding sash.) In the northeast side wall there is one window opening towards the north end of the wall with a three light fixed window. All of the windows have exterior board shutters, added in 1989 when the Thisted family restored the building.

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Exploration / Settlement

### Period of Significance

1906-1908 (Elmer Breen occupancy)

1913-1923 (Guy Ressler occupancy)

### Significant Dates

1906 (original construction)

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Elmer J. Breen, Builder

### Period of Significance (justification)

The periods of significance reflect the times that the house was inhabited by individuals actively involved in improving the land to satisfy the requirements of the homestead legislation.

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

### Summary Statement of Significance

The Guy Ressler homestead house is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, at the local level of significance under Criteria A and C, for its associative and representative value as an example of the modest improvements typically erected on homestead claims in the intermountain valleys of western Montana. The building possesses all seven aspects of integrity. It occupies its original location and its setting has not been modified by modern intrusive elements. With the exception of the replacement of window sash in an original window opening, the materials, as well as the workmanship and design accurately reflect its original homestead-era construction. The period of significance identified for this property covers the initial settlement period between 1906 and 1908, and the period during which Guy Ressler and his family used the building as their homestead residence, between 1913 and about 1923.

The house is the only building that survives from the homestead era. This simple, one-room log dwelling, constructed by the original claimant, Elmer Breen, with materials available on site, served as the Ressler home for the tenure of their occupancy, 1913 to 1923. Although Guy Ressler and his mother, Elizabeth Ressler, both were successful in bringing their adjacent homestead entries to patent, neither property yielded sufficient surplus income to support the family. Rather, it was left to Elizabeth Ressler to work outside her homestead claim to make money to support her family. In this regard, the Ressler property is typical of many homesteads in the intermountain valleys of western Montana in which claimants had to “work out” to make ends meet.

### Historic Context: Settlement of the Ninemile Valley

Like many other parts of Western Montana, sustained, historic-era settlement of the Ninemile Valley began with a gold rush. In the mid-1860s, miners heading north to gold strikes in the Kootenai River country in Canada used the Nine Mile Valley as a shortcut: From the Mullan Road, they headed up Nine Mile Creek to Siegel Pass, where they crossed back into the main stem of the Clark Fork River drainage.<sup>1</sup> In 1874, prospectors discovered placer gold within the Ninemile Creek drainage proper, and the ensuing rush brought thousands of prospectors and miners to the area. The Nine Mile mining district was first mentioned in a federal government report in 1877, where it was described as lying 27 miles from the mouth of the creek.<sup>2</sup> Just two years later the majority of the miners had left the area for new strikes, leaving only 60 people in the district’s mining camps.<sup>3</sup>

At least two camps supported Nine Mile district mines. The earliest of these was Montreal, also known as ‘Old Town.’ Located towards the upper end of the valley at the north edge of the mining district, it lay adjacent to a placer claim patented in 1877 by Benjamin F. Housen, A. A. Lalond, Alexis Pereault, Louis A. Barrette and Ezra Gaver.<sup>4</sup> Another camp, named Martina, was located about five miles southeast of Old Town, near the San Martina Mine, which opened in about 1890. The production from the San Martina and the adjacent Nine Mile Mine continued strong through about 1915, but declined afterwards. For a time, Martina had its own post office, which principally served the mine operators and miners in their employ.<sup>5</sup>

Agriculturalists followed miners into the Ninemile Valley during the late 1800s. As might be expected, the earliest homestead claims were located in the lower, wider part of the valley bottom with more tillable land. Southeast of the

<sup>1</sup> Completed in 1862, the Mullan Road linked Fort Walla Walla, Washington Territory, with Fort Benton, Montana Territory, the upper most point of navigation on the Missouri River. The completion of the Mullan Road facilitated the movement of people and goods into and through the territories.

<sup>2</sup> Historic Context for the Nine Mile Creek aka Kennedy Creek Mining District.  
<http://deq.mt.gov/abandonedmines/linkdocs/146tech.mcp> (accessed 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Housen also was among the nine claimants of a 142-acre placer claim farther south along the Ninemile Creek main stem, patented in 1883. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Serial Patent No. MT 065022.

<sup>5</sup> Missoula County directories list Martina as having its own post office at least through 1913. However by 1927 area residents received their mail at Stark, a country post office 14 miles southeast. R. L. Polk & Co’s Missoula County Director 1927-1928, p.280.

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

Brien / Ressler homestead, in Township 16 N Range 23 W, entrants patented lands under the original Homestead Act of 1862 (12 Stat. 391) and under earlier, 1820 legislation allowing cash entries (3 Stat. 566). The rate of homesteading increased during the late 1890s and early 1900s, until much of the arable land in the bottom of the lower Ninemile Valley was filed upon or patented by private interests.<sup>6</sup>

In September of 1906, Presidential Proclamation 34 (Stat 3234) created the Lolo Forest Reserve. The new reserve brought 1,211,680 acres of the public domain, including much of the land within the Ninemile Creek drainage and its tributaries, under federal protection.<sup>7</sup> From this point forward, a US Forest Service presence became a permanent component of the valley's community. In the early days of the US Forest Service, federal employees' principal duty was to protect timber on public lands from both fire and trespass. They also handled applications for agricultural homesteads, one part of which was conducting field surveys of potential homestead claims.<sup>8</sup>

On December 31, 1906, just three months after the establishment of the Lolo Forest Reserve, Elmer J. Breen of Missoula filed Homestead Application No. 4 to open 160 acres of land within the reserve boundary for agricultural settlement.<sup>9</sup> Breen claimed to have settled in the area in June of 1906. The projected legal location of the acreage included the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , S $\frac{1}{2}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , and NW $\frac{1}{4}$  SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 23 in Township 17 North, Range 24 West. The acting secretary of the Department of Agriculture forwarded Breen's request to the Secretary of the Interior in April of 1908.<sup>10</sup> The Secretary approved the request, and Lolo employees conducted a metes and bounds survey to mark the boundary of Breen's claim.

Not long after Breen's request, the Lolo Forest Reserve filed an administrative withdrawal for 120 acres adjacent to Breen's agricultural homestead. Administrative withdrawals typically were located in areas suitable for the construction of buildings to house employees, with enough pasture to keep the livestock employees needed to perform their patrols. The withdrawal for the Martina Ranger Station was approved on October 29 of 1908.<sup>11</sup>

In 1909, Arthur Goolie (also spelled Gooley) filed Homestead Application No. 54 for 160 acres adjacent to Breen's claim, corresponding to the N  $\frac{1}{2}$  N  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Section 23. In the process of conducting the survey for Goolie's application, Forest Assistant, Thomas Spaulding, noted some of the improvements made by Breen. Spaulding began his survey at Corner No. 4 of the Martina Ranger Station, and proceeded north, across Breen's property. In his notes dated December 15, 1909, Spaulding made reference to "Breen's house." He also noted other evidence of Breen's efforts, including an area of "plowed ground," that he crossed before setting the first corner for Goolie's parcel. With regard to the land

---

<sup>6</sup> The Ressler Homestead House is located a few miles south of the Reservation Divide—the ridge that marks the southern boundary of the Flathead Indian Reservation. Established under the 1855 Hellgate Treaty, the reservation incorporates a small portion of the aboriginal territories of the Bitterroot Salish, Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai people, who were the original occupants of the area. The extent of their aboriginal territories included western Montana, parts of northern Idaho, British Columbia and western Wyoming.

<sup>7</sup> In the Receipts Act of March 4, 1907, the name "forest reserves" was changed to "national forests"; thus, the Lolo Forest Reserve became known as the Lolo National Forest.

<sup>8</sup> The 1891 Forest Reserve Act, which gave the President of the United States authority to establish forest reserves, acknowledged private claims made prior to the creation of individual reserves. However, western interests clamored for a system that would allow new filings on "agricultural lands" located inside reserve boundaries. In response, in 1906 Congress passed the Forest Homestead Act, which authorized settlement of agricultural, i.e., "tillable" lands within the boundaries of forest reserves. After its passage, the US Forest Service was charged with ensuring the validity of a claimant's testimony; district rangers scrutinized most of the homestead entries filed within the administrative boundaries of Western Montana's national forests. Initially, the Forest Service suggested that they respond only to specific applications for agricultural homesteads, such as those filed by Breen and Goolie. It was not until 1912 that a rider attached to an appropriations bill directed the Secretary of Agriculture to classify and segregate lands within the boundaries of the forests that could be open to settlement under the homestead legislation.

<sup>9</sup> Note that Breen's name is also spelled Brien in other forest service documents.

<sup>10</sup> Acting Secretary, Department of Agriculture to Secretary of the Interior, April 2, 1908. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, Record Group 49 (RG 49) National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D. C. (Hereafter NARA).

<sup>11</sup> The withdrawal included the S $\frac{1}{2}$  SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 23 and the E $\frac{1}{2}$  SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 22, in Township 17 North, Range 24 West. Master Title Plat for T 17 N, R 24 E <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>.

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

included in Goolie's homestead application, Spaulding concluded that it contained roughly 130 acres of "good agricultural land," with the remainder only suitable for pasture.<sup>12</sup>

Other than the information derived from the agricultural homestead applications and associated surveys completed by the Lolo Forest Reserve, little further is known about either Breen or Goolie. Elmer Breen does not appear in either the 1900 or 1910 census for Missoula County. An Arthur Gooley is listed in the 1910 census for Frenchtown Township in Missoula County, in which he described himself as a 25 year old native of Michigan, working as a self-employed placer miner.<sup>13</sup> If Gooley worked the placer mines in the Nine Mile Mining District, he may have been familiar with the Burnt Fork Creek area. However, neither Brien nor Goolie proceeded with the next step in the homestead process, i.e., neither filed a homestead entry with the General Land Office. The individuals who did file on the land were Guy Ressler and his mother, Elizabeth Ressler.

### **Guy and Elizabeth Ressler Homesteads**

Guy Ressler, his mother, Elizabeth, and his elder brother, Elmer, arrived in Missoula, Montana in about 1905. Prior to leaving their home town of Tipton, Indiana, Guy worked as a saloon keeper and Elmer as a book keeper. Elizabeth kept house for Elmer and two other boarders, while Guy lived with his first wife in their own home in Tipton.<sup>14</sup> By 1905, all three Resslers lived at 523 East Cedar Street in Missoula, where Elizabeth ran a boarding house. Initially, Elmer worked as a brewer and Guy as a laborer.<sup>15</sup> By 1907 however, both brothers worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad—Elmer as a clerk, and Guy as a car repairman. Guy still lived with his mother in her boarding house on Cedar Street, while Elmer had moved to his own residence on Wolf Street.<sup>16</sup>

By 1910, both brothers had married, Guy to his second wife, a 24-year old woman from Finland, who had immigrated to the United States with her family in 1891.<sup>17</sup> They lived with Elizabeth in the boarding house on East Cedar Street. Elmer, his wife and two children lived in a home at 321 Madison Street. Both Ressler brothers continued to work for the railroad.

In 1913, however, Guy Ressler chose a new path. On January 13 of that year, he filed a homestead entry (No. 04641) in the Missoula County Land Office for the land included in Elmer Breen's agricultural homestead application. Two weeks later, Elizabeth Ressler filed a homestead entry (No. 04642) for the land included in Arthur Goolie's application. Ressler moved into a small log house already on his claim—presumably the house built by Breen, and began to make improvements to his claim and that of his mother.

The first year on his claim, Ressler cultivated about 12 acres of rye and tame grasses and also raised garden truck.<sup>18</sup> He may also have built the 14 ft by 18 ft log house that his mother moved into in June of 1913.<sup>19</sup> Although Ressler's 160

---

<sup>12</sup> "Arthur Goolie Agricultural Homestead No. 54, Lolo National Forest," surveyor's notes and associated plat. Notes and map approved by Elers Koch, Forest Supervisor on December 24, 1909. Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641 (Guy Ressler), RG 49, NARA.

<sup>13</sup> 1910 Federal Census, Frenchtown, Missoula County, Montana, Roll T624-834, page 15A, Enumeration District 0058, Image 685, Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29 (RG 29), NARA. An Arthur Gooley is listed in the 1920 census as a resident of Stark (a rural post office in the lower part of the Ninemile Creek drainage), however, his age in 1920 was 41, indicating that he is not the same Arthur Gooley listed in the 1910 census.

<sup>14</sup> 1900 US Federal Census for Cicero Township, Tipton City, Indiana. Roll 406, page 15A Enumeration District 122. United States of America, Bureau of the census. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, NARA.

<sup>15</sup> R. L. Polk & Co's Missoula & Ravalli County Directory, 1905, p. 174-175.

<sup>16</sup> R. L. Polk & Co's Missoula County Directory, 1907, p. 212.

<sup>17</sup> 1910 US Federal Census, Missoula Ward 1, Missoula County, Montana. Roll: T624\_834, page 6B Enumeration District 0064; Image 877, FHL Microfilm: 1374847.

<sup>18</sup> Final Proof, Testimony of Claimant (Guy Ressler), January 23, 1923. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, Record Group 49 (RG 49), NARA.

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

acres had been cleared of timber prior to him moving onto the property, his mother's claim contained stands of pine and fir—the likely source of the house logs for Elizabeth's home.<sup>20</sup>

By 1916, Guy Ressler had increased the cultivated area within his claim to about 25 acres which yielded 12 tons of hay. Three years later, he cut 20 tons of grass hay from the same acreage. Ressler also worked his mother's adjacent homestead claim, which in 1914 included three acres planted to timothy. In 1915, those same three acres yielded only one ton of hay. Eventually, Elizabeth's claim would include 27 acres "seeded to tame grass."<sup>21</sup>

In 1916, Ressler filed a water appropriation for 160 inches of water from Burnt Fork Creek for agricultural and domestic use.<sup>22</sup> An 18 inch by 12 inch ditch diverted the water from the east bank of the creek and carried it 200 feet to its point of use. Other improvements, all located in the vicinity of his house included: a 16 ft by 32 ft root cellar, a 16 ft by 32 ft henhouse, a 20 ft by 40 ft log barn, a 40 ft wagon shed, a 20 ft by 20 ft hay barn, and about a mile and a half of fencing.<sup>23</sup>

Between 1913 and about 1921, Guy Ressler made a concerted effort to meet the residency requirements of the homestead legislation. In his testimony submitted for his final proof in January of 1923, he stated that for the first seven years after filing he resided on the claim year-round. Indeed, the 1915-1916 and 1917-1918 R. L. Polk directories for Missoula County, indicate that Guy received his mail at the Martina Post Office, located within a mile or two from his homestead claim.<sup>24</sup> However, the two years prior to submitting his final testimony, he had been forced to be absent from the claim for extended periods due to illness: The 1920 census lists Guy Ressler, his wife Marie (or Mary) and young daughter as living with his mother in the East Cedar Street home in Missoula.

Elizabeth's residency was less steady. In her final proof testimony, she stated that she occupied her claim continuously for the first 12 months. In contrast, between June of 1914 and 1923 she spent only four to six months out of the year on her claim. The time that she spent away from the claim was to "Help care for my sick son and his family and to secure the money for both of us to improve our places ...."<sup>25</sup> Although both mother and son were absent from their claims for much of 1920 and 1921, Guy Ressler hired others to cultivate the land in his absence.<sup>26</sup>

On January 16, 1918, the Register of the United States Land Office in Missoula sent a letter to Guy Ressler (sic) stating that the five year period within which to provide proof of settlement and cultivation of his homestead claim had expired. Ressler had 30 days from the date of the service of the notice to "show cause before us why your claim shall not be declared forfeited and your entry canceled, for noncompliance with the requirements of the law, so that the case may be

---

<sup>19</sup> Final Proof, Testimony of Claimant (Elizabeth Ressler), May 11, 1923. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004662, Record Group 49 (RG 49), NARA.

<sup>20</sup> Elmer Breen may have cut the timber from his homestead himself or had a logging company clear his land. The Anaconda Company and its predecessors began harvesting timber in the Ninemile Valley beginning in the 1890s. Most of the harvest occurred on lands that the company purchased from the Great Northern Railroad. However, it was not uncommon for homesteaders to sell their timber to logging companies, thus initiating the process of clearing the land for agricultural use. In any event, by 1913, when Guy Ressler filed his homestead entry to the land originally claimed by Breen, the timber had been removed from the 160-acre parcel.

<sup>21</sup> In her final proof, Elizabeth Ressler stated that it took about three years for the hay to become well seeded in the rocky ground that characterized her claim.

<sup>22</sup> Water Appropriation dated July 15, 1916, filed July 29, 1916. Vol. I Water Rights, page 309. Abstract of Title, Thisted Ranch, Ralph and Betty Thisted private papers.

<sup>23</sup> Final Proof, Testimony of Claimant (Guy Ressler), January 23, 1923. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, RG 49, NARA.

<sup>24</sup> In 1917 most of the people living at Martina were involved with mining in some capacity or another. Ressler was the only farmer listed. Most other farmers and ranchers received their mail at Stark, a country post office about 14 miles south.

<sup>25</sup> Final Proof, Testimony of Claimant (Elizabeth Ressler), May 11, 1923. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004662, RG 49, NARA. Elizabeth Ressler may have retained her residence in Missoula, as her name appears in city directories for 1913, 1915, 1917 and 1922.

<sup>26</sup> Final Proof, Testimony of Claimant (Guy Ressler) and Testimony of Witness (Ira Free) January 23, 1923. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, RG 49, NARA.



Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

reported to the Commissioner of the General Land Office for proper action.” The Register went as far as reporting the claim for cancellation to the Commission of the General Land Office (GLO) in Washington D. C. However, on April 20, the Register wrote again to the commissioner stating that the order for cancellation was in error, and that the reason that final proof had not been made was because the township had not been surveyed. He stated further that Guy Ressler had “made the appropriate application for final proof, which was suspended until the survey was completed “sometime this coming summer.”<sup>27</sup>

In fact, the GLO did not complete the survey of the township until the summer of 1919, and the plat was not approved until April of 1922. The plat shows the boundaries of both Guy and Elizabeth’s homestead claims. The only improvement shown within Guy’s claim is a house. Other improvements noted in the immediate vicinity are a “U. S. F. S. tool shed,” within the boundary of the Martina Ranger Station withdrawal, and a “U. S. F. S. Trail,” extending northwest from a road accessing Guy Ressler’s house. No improvements are shown within Elizabeth’s claim.<sup>28</sup>

Both Guy and Elizabeth Ressler filed their final proof papers early in 1923—Guy in January and Elizabeth in May. In a letter dated January 13, 1923, District Ranger, Fred Morrell wrote that the Forest Service would “enter no protest against the issuance of patent for the lands covered by” Guy Ressler’s entry.”<sup>29</sup> Just ten days later, Guy filed his final Testimony of Claimant in the Missoula US Land Office. Four witnesses also filed individual statements corroborating his claims, and he received his patent on March 27, 1923.<sup>30</sup>

Elizabeth made an application to submit her final proof papers on May 11, however, the Forest Service found an objection to her claim. Specifically, Ranger Morrell found that the amount of cultivated area within Elizabeth’s claim (about two acres), was not “adequate to comply with the requirements of the (homestead) law.”<sup>31</sup> Morrell also stated that if the Department of the Interior would waive the requirements or approve a reduction of the area to be cultivated, the Forest Service would have no objection to the issuance of a patent. In response, on May 12, Elizabeth completed an Application for Reduction of the Required Area of Cultivation form. In it she stated:

.. in turning this top soil under the gravelly soil, causes it to dry out badly, it takes from two to three years for it to become compact, and retain the moisture as it should. After some years of experience in getting the land seeded to timothy which is the most profitable crop. In my judgment, a far superior method, after the land has been cleared of all brush, disk twice both ways, sow the seed, the tender roots of the grass have a better chance in this thin coating of rich soil to become well rooted before the dry weather comes. In asking for a patent on the amount of improvements that has been done, will say my intention is in the future seeding to prepare the ground as I have stated, it being much less expensive, and a far better method, than the old plan of plowing. My son tested a strip across ten acres, three rod in width, the disked piece gave far the best result in a shorter period of time, the plowed part burnt out badly, required a second seeding. I consider this a fair test.<sup>32</sup>

The Register, Fred Stoddard recommended that Elizabeth’s request be approved.<sup>33</sup>

In a letter dated July 27, the GLO informed the Missoula Land Office that Elizabeth’s request had been granted, stating that grazing would be an acceptable alternative to cultivation. However, Elizabeth’s final proof would need to include

<sup>27</sup> Frank M. McHaffie, Register, to Guy Rissler (sic), January 16, 1918; McHaffie to the Commissioner of the General Land Office, March 4, 1918; McHaffie to the Commissioner, April 20, 1918. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, RG 49, NARA.

<sup>28</sup> Plat for T 17 N R 24 W, Approved April 4, 1922, Gilman Bullard, Surveyor General (<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>).

<sup>29</sup> Fred Morrell (District Ranger) to Register and Receiver, US Lands Office, Missoula, Montana, January 13, 1923. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, RG 49, NARA.

<sup>30</sup> Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, RG 49, NARA.

<sup>31</sup> Fred Morrell, District Forester to Register and Receiver, April 30, 1923. United States Land Office, Missoula. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004662, RG 49, NARA.

<sup>32</sup> “Application for Reduction of the Required Area of Cultivation” completed May 12, 1923. Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004662, RG 49, NARA.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

the number and kinds of stock grazed, the period of time that they were on the land, and “by whom they are owned if not owned by the claimant, and what remuneration was received for the grazing privileges.” Apparently, this final requirement was waived, as the Testimony of Claimant and Testimony of Witness forms included in Elizabeth Ressler’s land entry file are dated May 11. The only indication of grazing comes from Guy Ressler, a witness to Elizabeth’s tenure, in which he stated that 30 seeded acres on his mother’s claim was also used for pasture. Elizabeth Ressler finally received a patent to her homestead claim on November 12, 1923.

The Resslers did not retain their properties long after receiving their patents. Likely because of Guy’s poor health, in May of 1924, both Guy and Elizabeth sold their property to Sanford Manheimer.<sup>34</sup> The following month, Elizabeth wrote to friends in Tipton, Indiana informing them of her son’s death on June 13 from diabetes.<sup>35</sup> For a time, Guy’s widow, Mary, and his young daughter lived with Elizabeth in Missoula, first in the East Cedar Street house and then in the Madison Street house occupied earlier by Elmer Ressler. By 1929, however, Elizabeth and Mary had left the area.<sup>36</sup>

Very little is known about Manheimer’s involvement in the Ninemile Valley ranch. Both census and city directories from 1910 through 1935 list Sandford Manheimer was the proprietor of a clothing store, the Tailored Ready Company, in Seattle, Washington. By 1930, he had retired and was living with his wife Ella and 16 year-old son in the city.<sup>37</sup> Manheimer may have purchased the Ninemile Valley properties purely for investment purposes, and the Ressler homestead houses and other improvements may not have been used during his tenure. He died sometime after 1935, and on September 22, 1938, the trustee for Manheimer’s estate (acting on behalf of his widow, son and daughter-in-law) sold his land holdings in the Ninemile Valley, including the 320-acre Ressler parcel, to Fred A Thisted.<sup>38</sup>

A native of Norway, Fred Thisted immigrated to the United States in 1901. Initially, he settled near Raynesford in Cascade County, where he patented a 326-acre homestead in 1914. According to his son, Ralph Thisted, the family moved west of the divide to take advantage of the ready supply of irrigation water—which was scarce on the drought-plagued Cascade County farm. Accordingly, Fred sold the original homestead and moved his family (including wife Claudia, sons Ralph and Bruce and step children, Ruth and Lloyd Allen) to the Ninemile Valley, where they purchased Manheimer’s holdings, which included the Ressler’s 320 acres adjacent to Burnt Fork Creek.

Originally, the Thisted tried raising sheep, but quickly turned to cows. They used the Burnt Fork property solely for its grazing, as it adjoined their Lolo National Forest grazing lease, which extended to the Reservation Divide. Fred and Claudia’s oldest son, Ralph, remembered the old barn on the Guy Ressler homestead being located between the house and the gate to the property. Besides the barn, Elizabeth’s small log homestead house also stood in a timbered area within her claim boundary. The 320-acre parcel had two clearings, including one directly in front of Guy Ressler’s house, which probably corresponded to the cultivated area identified in Guy Ressler’s final proof papers. Fred Thisted

---

<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth Ressler to S. Manheimer, Warranty Deed, May 22, 1924, Deed Book 101, page 28, Guy and Mary Ressler to S. Manheimer, Warranty Deed, May 22, 1924, Deed Book 101, page 29, Office of the Clerk and Recorder, Missoula County, Missoula, Montana. Although Guy and Elizabeth had received their patents months earlier, they did not file them for record until the day of the sale to Manheimer.

<sup>35</sup> Transcription from the July 2, 1924 issue of the Tipton Tribune (page 7), attached to Guy Ressler Tree, Ancestry.com. Accessed July 18, 2012.

<sup>36</sup> The 1925 R. E. Polk Directory for Missoula lists Elizabeth and her daughter-in-law as residing at the East Cedar Street house. The 1927 directory lists both widows living in the Madison Street house occupied by Elmer Ressler in 1910. Neither Elizabeth nor Mary Ressler is listed in the 1929 Polk directory. R. L. Polk & Company 1925 Missoula City Directory, p. 220. R. L. Polk & Company 1927-1928 Missoula City Directory, p.204.

<sup>37</sup> Page 10-B, Enumeration District: 0129, Seattle Ward 7, King Washington. Roll: T:624\_1660, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 RG 29, NARA; Page 7A, Enumeration District 169, Roll T625-1927, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, RG 29 NARA; Page 30A; Enumeration District: 70, Image: 132.0 FHL microfilm: 2342229, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, RG 29, NARA; Polk’s Seattle (Washington) City Directory Vol. 1935 XLIX, p. 969.

<sup>38</sup> Deed Book 124, page 358-359, Office of the Clerk and Recorder, Missoula County Courthouse, Missoula, Montana.

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

did allow a man by the name of Hackman to build a saw mill adjacent to the Guy Ressler homestead house, in return for lumber.<sup>39</sup>

After Fred Thisted's death in 1972, his wife Claudia and sons, Ralph and Bruce, continued to operate the Ninemile Valley ranch, using the 320 acres in the Burnt Fork drainage for grazing. Claudia Thisted died in 1981, and ten years later the brothers sold the bulk of the ranch (roughly 2000 acres). They retained ownership of the Ressler homesteads (totally 320 acres) in the Burnt Fork drainage. Ralph and his wife Betty, and his brother, Bruce, placed a conservation easement on the property. The easement protects the Ressler homestead house, and limits the development that can occur within the 320 acres.<sup>40</sup>

In the summer of 1998, Ralph and Betty Thisted restored the Guy Ressler homestead house. Exterior work included the replacement of rotten sill and wall logs and the application of new chinking. A concrete foundation wall, poured sometime after original construction, was removed and replaced with concrete piers. Deteriorated pole purlins and rafters were repaired and/or replaced and new corrugated metal roofing was applied to the building. Most of the original wooden window sashes and door were removed, restored, and reinstalled. Wooden Shutters were added to the window openings and a wooden screen door to the doorway.<sup>41</sup>

Until the summer of 2000, dense stands of timber—grown up since 1913—encroached on the rear (northeast) side of the homestead house. However, a late summer wild fire burned through the area, killing most of the timber on the property. Unfortunately, the fire also destroyed a frame privy that stood at the edge of the timber behind the house, as well as Elizabeth's homestead house. The Guy Ressler house was saved by US Forest Service firefighters, who applied retardant foam to the building.

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Historic Context for the Nine Mile Creek aka Kennedy Creek Mining District.

<http://deq.mt.gov/abandonedmines/linkdocs/146tech.mcp> (accessed 2011).

Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004641, RG 49, NARA.

Land Entry Papers for Serial Patent No. 0004662, RG 49, NARA.

Ralph and Betty Thisted, private papers, Huson, Montana

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☒ Other  
Name of repository: National Archives and Records Administration

---

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

---

---

<sup>39</sup> Personal communication, Ralph Thisted to Janene Caywood, October 7, 2009.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. The terms of the easement allow timber harvest and the construction of one other building complex within the 320-acre parcel. Mining is specifically prohibited.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

Guy Ressler Homestead House  
Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 11 06 79730 52 32280  
Zone Easting Northing

3                       
Zone Easting Northing

2                       
Zone Easting Northing

4                       
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary encloses the area within 20 feet on all sides of the homestead house, which is located in the SW1/4SW1/4NW1/4 of Section 23, Township 17N Range 24W.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The homestead house is the only building remaining from the period of significance that was historically part of the Ressler homestead.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janene Caywood

organization CRCS

date July 27, 2012

street & number 1002 South 6<sup>th</sup> St. West

telephone 406 728-9190

city or town Missoula

state MT

zip code 59801

e-mail [crs@montana.com](mailto:crs@montana.com)

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

---

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**All Photos:**

Name of Property: Guy Ressler Homestead House

City or Vicinity: Vicinity of Huson, Montana

County: Missoula

State: Montana

Photographer: C. Milo McLeod

Date Photographed: June 18, 2009

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of \_\_\_\_.

---

**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ralph and Betty Thisted

street & number 28850 Ninemile Road

(406) 626-5693

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Huson

state MT

zip code 59846

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

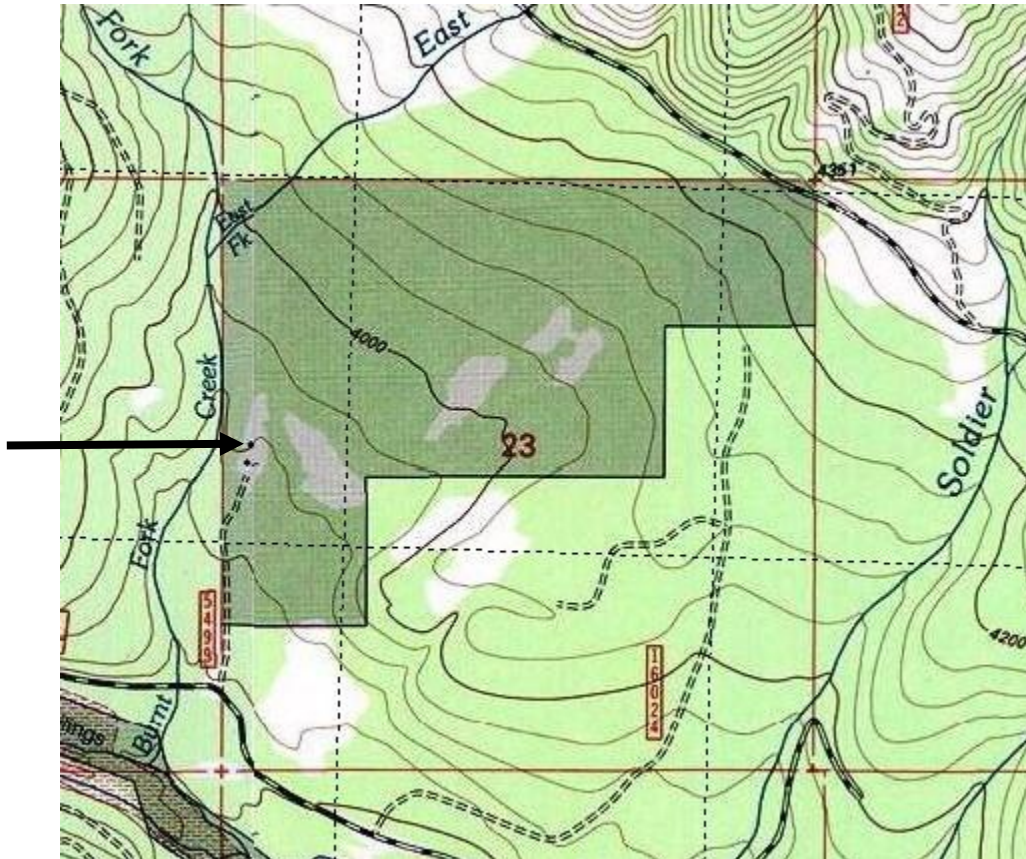
Missoula County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 14



Location of the Guy Ressler Homestead House. Found on the Horsehead Peak, MT (1999) 7.5' quadrangle map.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 15



2011 Aerial photo showing the Ressler Homestead House.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 16



2004 aerial photo showing the boundaries of the Guy Ressler and Elizabeth Ressler homestead claims.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number National Register Photographs

Page 17

**All Photographs:**

Name of Property: Guy Ressler Homestead House

City or Vicinity: Vicinity of Huson, Montana

County: Missoula

State: Montana

Photographer: C. Milo McLeod

Date Photographed: June 18, 2009

Description of Photograph(s) and number:



Photo 0001. Looking south-southwest, over the burned area towards the Guy Ressler Homestead house.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number National Register Photographs

Page 18



Photo 0002. Looking southeast from the front of the house. Access road is in middle ground of photo.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number National Register Photographs

Page 19



Photo 0003. Looking north-northwest: detail of the front (southeast) wall showing the overhang and board stoop.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property

Missoula County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number National Register Photographs

Page 20



Photo 0004. Looking east at the rear (northwest) and southwest side walls of the Ressler house.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Guy Ressler Homestead House

Name of Property  
Missoula County, Montana  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number National Register Photographs

Page 21



Photo 0005. Looking south at the rear (northwest) and northeast side of the Ressler homestead house.